



Michigan Dental Hygienists' Association

## **Testimony to the House Health Policy Committee**

**March 24, 2015**

Mr. Chairman and Members of the Committee:

My name is Allison Restauri, RDH, BSDH, MA and I am the President-Elect of the Michigan Dental Hygienists Association. I would like to thank you for the opportunity to speak today. The MDHA represents and promotes registered dental hygienists in the state of Michigan through education, licensure, research, and best practice standards. We are a subsidiary of the American Dental Hygienists Association.

Dental hygienists are primary healthcare professionals who work alongside dentists in most cases. Our education and training focuses on prevention and treatment of oral disease. Common responsibilities include:

- Patient screening procedures; such as assessment of oral health conditions, review of the health history, oral cancer screening, head and neck inspection, dental charting, taking blood pressure and pulse
- Taking and developing dental radiographs (x-rays)
- Removing calculus, plaque (hard and soft deposits), and stain from the teeth
- Treatment of periodontal disease with scaling and root planing
- Applying preventive materials to the teeth (e.g., sealants and fluorides)
- Administration of local anesthesia and nitrous oxide
- Teaching patients appropriate oral hygiene strategies to maintain oral health, like tooth brushing, flossing, smoking cessation and nutritional counseling
- Counseling patients on Rx and over the counter products
- Making impressions of patients' teeth for study casts (models of teeth used by dentists to evaluate patient treatment needs)
- Performing documentation and office management activities

In Michigan, the practice of dental hygiene is regulated by the Department of Licensing and Regulatory Affairs (LARA) and Department of Community Health (DCH). Dental Hygienists fill four seats on the Board of Dentistry.

Dental hygienists are licensed by the State to provide dental hygiene care and patient education. Michigan requires that dental hygienists be graduates of accredited dental hygiene education programs to be eligible for state licensure. Michigan also requires candidates for licensure to obtain a passing score on the National Board of Dental Hygiene Examination (a comprehensive written examination) in addition to passing the state-authorized licensure examination.

Upon receipt of their license, dental hygienists may use "R.D.H." after their names to signify recognition by the state that they are a Registered Dental Hygienist. All RDH's are required to stay current with CPR training and take 36 hours of continuing education credits per 3-year licensure schedule.

Dental hygienists receive their education through accredited academic programs at universities and colleges. Dental hygiene education programs offer clinical education in the form of supervised patient care experiences. Additionally, these programs include courses in liberal arts (e.g., English, speech, sociology and psychology); basic sciences (e.g., anatomy, physiology, pharmacology, immunology, chemistry, microbiology and pathology); and clinical sciences (e.g., dental hygiene, radiology and dental materials).

The MDHA is structured to ensure ongoing excellence in the field of oral healthcare. Our Executive Board is composed of five members (including myself) who work in tandem with our Council Chairs. The Council Chairs direct the Communications, Education, Finance, Membership, Public Health, and Legislative programs of the Association. Members of the Association are privileged to a number of services including:

- Access to a wide source of information relevant to dental hygienists working in Michigan.
- Discounted prices on continuing education courses
- Insurance options for professional liability, disability, and major medical.
- Employment assistance- including a state referral services, national classified advertising, and employment reference materials.

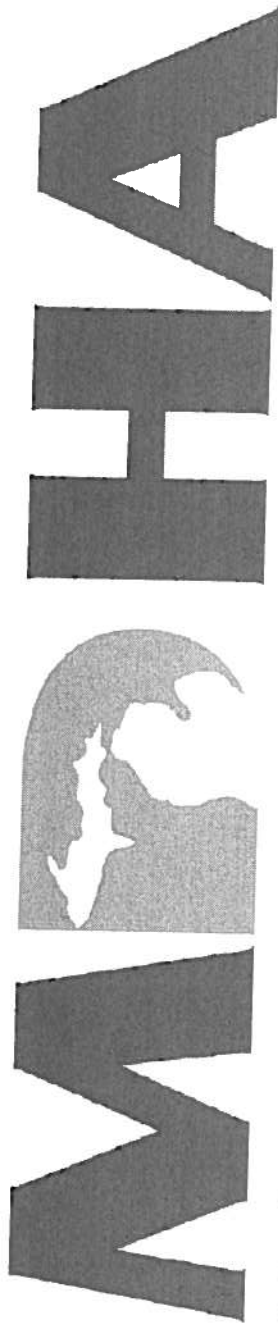
In order to maintain the level of involvement and professionalism that the MDHA holds itself to, there are several legislative issues we are currently supporting. The following legislative matters are among the many items supported by the MDHA:

- Expansion of Healthy Kids Dental funding to all Michigan counties (included in Governor Snyder's FY '16 Executive Budget)
- Requirement of dental screenings for kids entering school (pre-K)
- Gain limited prescription rights for Registered Dental Hygienists
- Allow supervision of Registered Dental Hygienists in alternative practice settings by MD's / DO's
- Protect ability to provide direct care via non-profits enrolled in the Public Act 161 program administered by the Department of Community Health

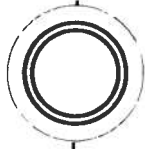
I would like to thank the committee for hearing us today, and urge you to carefully consider the points we have made. We would now be happy to take any questions.

Allison Restauri, RDH, BSDH, MA  
President- Elect  
Michigan Dental Hygienists' Association

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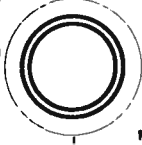


# HOUSE HEALTH POLICY TESTIMONY

TUESDAY, MARCH 24

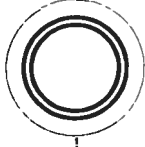
2015

# Dental Hygienists



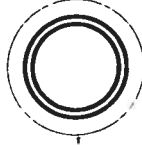
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# MDHA



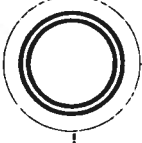
An association to advance the art and science of dental hygiene practice, a critical standard of care to achieve the public's total health through the promotion of the highest standards of education, licensure, research and practice.

# Qualifications



- Regulated by LARA and DCH.
- Four members of MDHA sit on the Board of Dentistry (LARA)
- Graduates of national and state dental hygiene board exams.
- Maintain 36 hours of continuing education credits every three years.

# Structure



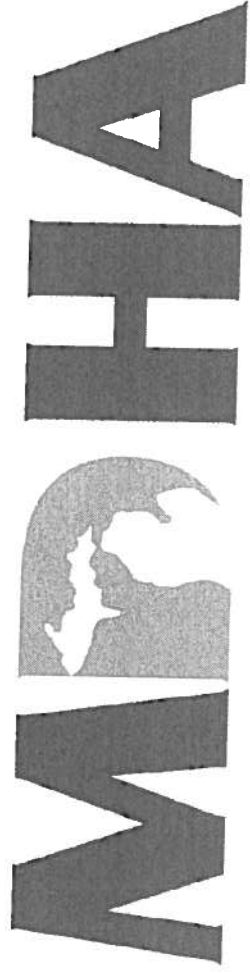
- Executive Board
    - President
    - President-Elect
    - Immediate Past President
    - Vice President
    - Treasurer
    - Association Admin.
  - Board of Trustees
- Council Chairs
    - Communications
    - Education
    - Finance
    - Membership
    - Public Health
    - Legislative (2x)

# Legislative Issues

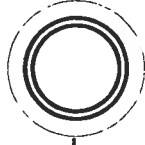


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